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AUTHOR Webb, Kathleen Ann
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ABSTRACT

An indexer faces unique challenges when the genre consists of biographical material written for children. The narrative prose style demands vividly descriptive indexing terms, but the youthful audience requires a control of vocabulary and a clear, simple presentation. The literature of library and information science yields a few sources on the indexing of biographies or nonfiction for children, but no source addresses this specific combination. In this research, content analysis and descriptive statistics were used to determine the occurrence and nature of indexes in recommended biographies written for children. Of 300 recommended biographies, about 40% were found to contain indexes, and most dated from recent years. The indexes were evaluated using an adapted checklist that followed the guidelines of the American Society of Indexers. Based on this data, the researcher recommends techniques to improve the quality of indexing in this genre. Indexes should be used consistently for books of more than 75 pages, divided into chapters, and are not heavily illustrated. A variety of indexing techniques should be incorporated, and the typography should be clear, with uncrowded format. (Contains 14 references.)
(Author/SLD)

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ED 378 973

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A STUDY OF

THE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF INDEXES

IN BIOGRAPHIES WRITTEN FOR CHILDREN

A Master's Research Paper submitted to the
Kent State University School of Library and Information Science
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Master of Library Science

by

Kathleen Ann Webb

March 24, 1994

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A STUDY OF

THE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF INDEXES

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ABSTRACT

An indexer faces unique challenges when the genre consists of biographical material written for children. The narrative prose style demands indexing terms which are vividly descriptive, yet the youthful audience requires a control of vocabulary and a clear, simple presentation. The literature of library and information science and of indexing yields a few sources on the indexing of biographies or on the indexing of nonfiction for children. However, no source addresses this specific combination of challenges. In this research, content analysis and descriptive statistics were used to determine the occurrence and the nature of indexes in recommended biographies written for children. The indexes were evaluated using an adapted checklist which followed the guidelines of the American Society of Indexers. Based on this data, the researcher has recommended techniques to improve the quality of indexing in this genre.

Master's Research Paper by

Kathleen Ann Webb

B.A., Augustana College, 1975

M.A., University of Texas at Arlington, 1983

M.L.S., Kent State University, 1994

Approved by

Advisor _____ Date 3/28/94

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I. The problem.

a) Introduction to the problem.

In perusing the literature of indexing, it is common to find indexers lamenting those works which present a great deal of useful information -- but which have no index to make that information readily accessible. The American Society of Indexers advances the view that informational books should indeed be indexed; their publications and workshops make available a body of useful procedural information. In the past five years, Hazel K. Bell and other ASI indexers have developed indexing techniques specific to the genre of the biography. These writings assume that the indexer is dealing with a biographical work written for an adult. However, many worthwhile insights are included and should certainly be incorporated into the indexer's repertoire of skills for use in constructing indexes to biographies written for children.

A search of the literature of library and information science revealed only a few articles on the indexing of biographies, none of which specifically applied to biographies written for children. Similarly, there were only a small number of articles which criticized the lack or inadequacy of indexes in nonfiction works written for children. Interestingly, these articles were written approximately twenty years ago, and the subject has hardly been addressed since that time. This lack of recent comment in the literature suggests that indexes are more likely to be found in nonfiction works for children published since the mid-seventies. Only one article dealt with the evaluation of indexes; Wittmann's brief study examined the features of award-winning indexes in an effort to quantify the characteristics of subheadings in noteworthy indexes.

b) Research problems which were addressed.

This research project examined and evaluated the indexes of biographical works written for children. This work was valuable and justifiable because it addressed several topics which are not to be found in the literature of library and information science, including indexing. First, based on an examination of the books and their indexes, the

researcher specified the characteristics of those books which should or should not have an index. The researcher noted the features of presentation which made an index effective, and determined, based on publication date, that a greater percentage of the biographies for children have been indexed in recent years. Secondly, the researcher used an adapted evaluative tool provided by ASI to assign a quantitative score to each index. With these scores as a statistical framework, the researcher described the characteristics of an excellent index, and recommended specific techniques for the indexing of biographical works for children.

c) Limitations of the study.

The study has been limited to those recommended biographies listed in Best Books for Children: Preschool through the Middle Grades (2nd ed., c1981) and in Best Books for Children: Preschool through Grade 6 (4th ed., c1990). Though the earlier work was published in 1981, it included many books (almost half the list) which were published prior to 1975. Therefore, it provided an adequate representation of several decades of recommended books. The study was further limited to individual biographies. The major part of this work was based on approximately three hundred books. This sizable number was essential to give a historical perspective, and to provide a broad basis for the comparison of indexes and the techniques used in their construction.

d) Definitions of terms; assumptions.

The following terms were defined in the construction of this research project.

An index is a list of names, terms, and topics, often found in the back of a book. Its arrangement is usually alphabetical. Each entry is accompanied by one or more page numbers which refer to the location of information within the book.

A biography is the written history of a human life.

An individual biography is the written history of a human life which revolves around a single main character.

A collective biography contains short written histories of several separate human lives, gathered together in a single volume. The individuals are often selected for inclusion by some common aspect of

their separate lives. (Collective biographies are specifically eliminated from this study.)

Children are defined (for purposes of this study) as readers and/or users of information, up to grade six or approximately twelve years of age.

The following assumptions were made in the construction of this project.

Indexes increase the value of a work by making it possible to locate specific information within the text.

Children (as well as adults) need access to the information in books. Such information could be readily located if an adequate index accompanies the text.

Indexes vary in quality and comprehensiveness.

By comparing and evaluating many indexes, one may determine those characteristics which make up an effective, usable index.

II. The literature review.

The literature search was challenging because of the paucity of sources available. Dissertation Abstracts, the KSU Research Paper Index, ERIC, LISA, CATALYST and CLEVNET have been searched for source material. This search yielded several sources on the indexing of biographical materials, and several others on the indexing of nonfiction for children; no one source combined these topics. The evaluation of an index was mentioned only briefly, and in only a few sources.

a) The indexing of biographies.

Hazel K. Bell, a contemporary indexer and author, has written a number of articles on the techniques involved in indexing biographical material. Her article, "Indexing biographies: lives do bring their problems" (Bell, April 1989), calls attention to the narrative prose style which is typical of biographical works. This style demands particular attention to the selection of entries. The terminology used, especially with regard to names, requires caution lest it reflect a bias on the part of the indexer. A logical arrangement of the subheadings and an open layout will facilitate use. The treatment of the main character is mentioned, but

it is addressed more fully in her next article, "Indexing biographies: the main character" (Bell, April 1990). The arrangement of index entries under the main character may be in order of occurrence, alphabetical, or by topical groupings. Though each method has pros and cons, the topical grouping is preferable. These articles and others have been compiled in a brief but useful book, Indexing biographies and other stories of human lives (Bell, 1992). This is an excellent manual for the indexer concerned with the specifics of indexing biographies in narrative prose. Bell covers analysis, the handling of names, terminology, the arrangement of subheadings, and the treatment of the main character. She concludes with advice regarding presentation and layout.

b) The indexing of nonfiction for children.

The literature concerning the indexing of nonfiction for children is particularly interesting because it occurs within a limited time span. The earliest work, H. B. King's "Indexes to children's books are essential" (King, Spring 1967), points out that any nonfiction work serves as a reference tool for a child. As such, it should be indexed for quick access to relevant information. A few years later, Brenda Miller makes a similar observation in "Indexing children's books" (Miller, April 1973). Children's books, as resource materials, should be indexed. A logical format and a simple, attractive layout will facilitate their use. Cecilia Gordon feels that books for even the youngest readers should be indexed. In "The indexing of children's books" (Gordon, December 1976), she points out that a list of the contents is an inadequate substitute for a back-of-the-book index. Indexes must be accurate, consistent, and clear to make information retrievable. E. J. Wallis holds up the Resource issue of Highlights magazine as an example of an index for children which is carefully presented in an interesting and attractive fashion. Its spacing, color, illustrations, and special entertaining features are praised in "The Cinderella of indexing: children's books and comics" (Wallis, October 1973). A second article by H. B. King, "A survey of indexes in school library books" (King, October 1973), notes that indexes in nonfiction for children are more frequently included (than in the late sixties). Such tools should be simple and direct, using vocabulary suitable to the age or grade level for which the work is intended.

c) The evaluation of an index.

Because this research centered around the evaluation of indexes, it was important to note that the literature provides very few hints as to the features upon which an evaluation should be based. Bill Katz and Robin Kinger, editors of The publishing and review of reference sources (Katz, 1987), present a unique collection of articles which provide worthwhile considerations for the evaluation of reference tools. While the work does not specifically deal with the evaluation of indexes, numerous useful points may be inferred. F. W. Lancaster, in Indexing and abstracting in theory and practice (Lancaster, 1991), devotes a technical chapter to "The quality of indexing." He advises the indexer that his work may be flawed if vocabulary elements are not properly related, if the indexing is not sufficiently exhaustive or specific, if an incorrect term is used, or if an important term is omitted. Cecelia Wittmann presents an important piece of research in her work, "Subheadings in award-winning indexes: a quantitative evaluation " (Wittmann, April 1990). She notes that subheadings in award-winning indexes tend to be shorter and more vividly descriptive than those in ordinary indexes. However, the nature of the text will have an influence on good subheadings.

In order to evaluate the indexes of approximately ninety books, this researcher adapted the "Index evaluation checklist" (American Society of Indexers, 1993). This brief guide provided a standard tool to which other indexes could be compared. It provided the crucial foundation upon which this research was based.

III. Methodology.

a) General statement of methodology.

This exploratory research incorporated aspects of both content analysis and descriptive statistics. Content analysis is a technique which allows the researcher to identify specific characteristics and to quantitatively describe them. In this project the researcher sought to describe both the environment in which the indexes occurred, and the elements which occurred within those indexes. Descriptive statistics were used to show meaningful relationships based on the compilation and comparison of the quantitative data.

b) Detailed procedures: section 1.

Quantitative data was collected and recorded on index cards in order to determine the percentages of books which contain an index for each year of publication from 1936 to 1989. Quantitative analysis was used in a historical sense to determine that there is a modest but positive correlation between the publication date and the percentage of books which contain an index.

c) Detailed procedures: section 2.

The researcher used content analysis to note those characteristics of books which contain indexes by tallying descriptive features. These features included the range of pages (25-50, 51-75, 76-100, and 100+), whether the book contained words (there were no books composed solely of pictures), whether or not the book contained illustrations, whether or not the book was heavily illustrated (half or more of the pages containing illustrations), and whether or not the book was divided into chapters.

d) Detailed procedures: section 3.

The researcher tallied the publishers in order to determine whether certain publishers are more likely to present indexed books.

e) Instrument for description.

DESCRIPTION

Author _____

Title _____

Publisher _____

Date _____ Age level _____

Was book located? ____ Source _____

Does book contain index? ___ # of pages ___

Does book contain words? _____

Does book contain illustrations? _____

Is book heavily illustrated? _____

Does book have chapters? _____

Does index contain unusual features? _____

---

f) Detailed procedures: section 4.

In the second section, the researcher employed an adapted instrument from the American Society of Indexers to survey the contents of the indexes of approximately ninety books, and tallied the results in order to describe and rate the indexes. This data yielded a critical description of the indexes, with particular note of those aspects of the quality of indexing which are less than satisfactory. Based on this date, the researcher has made recommendations to improve the quality of indexing in biographies written for children.

The adapted instrument for evaluation is detailed under the Analysis of Data, section 4.

IV. Analysis of data.

a) Detailed procedures: section 1.

The researcher examined the quantitative date, shown in Table A, regarding the percentages of books which contain an index for each year of publication from 1936 to 1989. The dates prior to 1974 have been omitted from the final analysis because the small number of books in the 1981 and 1990 editions of Best books for children did not allow an accurate representation of the earlier years.

Between 1974 and 1989, the percentage of books containing an index fluctuated but remained at or below fifty per cent with the exception of the years 1987 and 1989. The fluctuation made it very difficult to interpret the data in a historical sense.

In the literature review the researcher noted that several articles regarding the need for indexing of nonfiction materials for children were published in the decade from 1967 to 1976. (The articles cited include King, Spring 1967; Miller, April 1973; Gordon, December 1976; Wallis, October 1973; and King, October 1976). There are no similar articles pointing out this need in the literature since that time. The researcher surmised that indexes were more frequently included in nonfiction material for children since the mid-1970's. Though the researcher noted some indexes before that time, the number of indexed books increased

since 1974 (though the percentage of indexed books did not notably increase for another decade).

Of greatest import was the fact that the percentage of indexed books exceeded the percentage of books without indexes in the recent years 1987 and 1989. The researcher suggests, based on this scanty information, that there is a trend toward a positive correlation between the publication date and the percentage of books which contain an index.

b) Table A: The percentage and number of books with and without an index for each year from 1989 back to 1952.

	With an index		Without an index	
1989	69%	9 books	31%	4 books
1988	47%	15 books	53%	17 books
1987	69%	11 books	31%	5 books
1986	29%	4 books	71%	10 books
1985	33%	2 books	67%	4 books
1984	46%	6 books	54%	7 books
1983	0%	0 books	100%	6 books
1982	11%	1 book	89%	8 books
1981	0%	0 books	100%	3 books
1980	50%	2 books	50%	2 books
1979	43%	6 books	57%	8 books
1978	27%	3 books	73%	8 books
1977	23%	3 books	77%	10 books
1976	14%	1 book	86%	6 books
1975	43%	3 books	57%	4 books
1974	33%	2 books	67%	4 books
1973	0%	0 books	100%	2 books
1972	0%	0 books	100%	2 books
1971	50%	1 book	50%	1 book
1970	14%	1 book	86%	6 books
1969	0%	0 books	0%	0 books
1968	17%	1 book	83%	5 books
1967	0%	0 books	100%	2 books
1966	33%	1 book	67%	2 books
1965	46%	2 books	60%	3 books

Table A continued:

	With an index		Without an index	
1964	33%	1 book	67%	2 books
1963	25%	1 book	75%	3 books
1962	0%	0 books	0%	0 books
1961	0%	0 books	0%	0 books
1960	100%	2 books	0%	0 books
1959	100%	1 book	0%	0 books
1958	100%	3 books	0%	0 books
1957	0%	0 books	0%	0 books
1956	100%	2 books	0%	0 books
1955	25%	1 book	75%	3 books
1954	0%	0 books	100%	1 book
1953	100%	1 book	0%	0 books
1952	50%	1 book	50%	1 book

---

c) Detailed procedures: section 2.

Several trends were evident upon an examination of the quantitative data (shown in Table B) regarding the description of the situations in which indexes occur.

When indexes occurred in books published prior to the mid-1970's, the book was most likely to be more than 100 pages in length. It was likely to have some illustrations, but was not heavily illustrated. It was invariably divided into chapters.

In the mid-1970's, there were numerically more indexes, but the same trends continued. However, a few examples occurred where the books had less than 100 pages, or were heavily illustrated.

Indexes were much more likely to occur in the books published since 1984. While the same overall trends continued, there was certainly more diversity in the description of the books. Books with smaller numbers of pages were indexed; a notable number of these books were heavily illustrated. A few books were not divided into chapters. The researcher suspects that these shorter, more colorful books have an appeal for younger readers. This evidence may indicate a new trend toward the indexing of materials for younger readers.

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d) Table B: The description of books in which indexes appear.

	Number of pages				Illustrated		Heavily Illustrated		Chapters	
	25+	50+	75+	100+	+	-	+	-	+	-
1989	0	3	4	2	9	0	3	6	9	0
1988	2	1	10	2	15	0	7	8	13	2
1987	1	2	5	3	11	0	6	5	10	1
1986	0	0	1	3	4	0	1	3	4	0
1985	1	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	1	1
1984	0	0	0	6	6	0	0	6	6	0
1983	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1982	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0
1981	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1980	0	0	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	1
1979	0	0	0	6	5	1	1	5	6	0
1978	0	1	0	2	2	1	0	3	3	0
1977	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	3	3	0
1976	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
1975	0	0	1	2	2	1	1	2	3	0
1974	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	2	2	0
1973	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1972	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1971	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0
1970	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0
1969	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1968	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0
1967	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1966	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
1965	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	2	2	0
1964	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0
1963	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0
1962	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1961	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1960	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	1	2	0
1959	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0
1958	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	3	3	0

Table B continued:

	Number of pages				Illustrated		Heavily Illustrated		Chapters	
1957	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1956	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	2	0
1955	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0
1954	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1953	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0

1944	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0

e) Detailed procedures: section 3.

The researcher attempted to determine by quantitative analysis whether certain publishers were more likely to present indexed books. The data, as shown on Table C, proved to be inconclusive. Publishers of relatively many books tended to publish books with and without indexes. A number of publishers in the sample have published only one or two indexed books; the data was too scanty to know whether they published only books with indexes. However, some publishers of books without indexes had a comparatively large number of books in the sample. It is more likely that they published only books without indexes.

The researcher noted that books in series were likely to be treated in similar fashion with regard to being indexed. A strong example was the series Encyclopedia of Presidents, published by Childrens Press. All the books in this series were indexed; however, Childrens Press also presented books outside of this series which were not indexed.

On the basis of this data, the researcher was not able to determine that some publishers consistently presented only books which were indexed.

f) Table C: Publishers of books with and without indexes.

Publisher	With index	Without index
Abingdon		1
Atheneum	1	
Avon	1	
Bobbs-Merrill		1
Bookwright	3	
Carolrhoda		6
Childrens	21	13
Country Beautiful		1
Coward		10
Creative Education		1
Crestwood		4
Crowell	5	10
Dell		2
Dillon		3
Dodd	1	
Doubleday	2	5
Dutton	1	1
Enslow	1	
Four Winds		2
Garrard	2	5
Grosset		1
Harcourt		9
Harper	2	2
Harvey House		1
Hastings		1
Holiday		1
Houghton	1	1
Jewish Publication Society	2	
Lerner	1	9
Little	2	1
Lodestar	1	
Lothrop	2	1
Macmillan	2	3
Messner	6	4

Table C continued:

Publisher	With index	Without index
Nelson	2	
Phillips		1
Pocket		2
Prentice		4
Prentice-Hall		2
Putnam	5	16
Rand	1	
Random	7	4
Scholastic		1
Scribner		1
Viking		4
Walker	2	1
Watts	11	1

g) Detailed procedures: section 4.

The researcher evaluated each index located on the basis of twenty-two questions as found in the instrument adapted from the American Society of Indexers. Each question is listed below, with brief analytical comments.

1) Is the vocabulary appropriate for the reading level?

In all cases the vocabulary was judged to be the same reading level as the text of the book. The grade level designation as presented by Best books for children was used throughout.

2) Are the main headings relevant?

In all cases the main headings were judged to be relevant because they dealt with material specifically presented in the text. (Five index headings were checked against the vocabulary of each text in question 3; the fact that the headings were located in the text is relevant to this question).

3) Do the main headings use the vocabulary which is used in the text?

In nearly all cases, the main headings were found to use the vocabulary used in the text. In the few exceptions, the indexer made use of "vivid descriptors" by using a term which accurately described the content of the text, but did not specifically appear in the working of the text.

4) Are the main headings limited to 5-7 descriptors?

In the indexes of shorter books (less than fifty pages) the main headings consistently used less than seven locators. However, in most indexes of longer works, there were just a few main headings, often regarding a central character or event, which exceeded seven locators.

5) Are the subheadings concise?

In approximately half of the indexes, subheadings did not occur. In those indexes where subheadings did occur, it was most likely that one or just a few main headings would have subheadings. These subheadings were consistently brief and concise.

6) Are subheadings over-analyzed?

The researcher did not believe that any subheadings were over-analyzed. Subheadings were often used to give access to the many events in the life of a main character and, in that context, were just as important as the other main headings in the index.

7) Are subheadings used where main headings should be?

Subheadings were used appropriately to provide access to subtopics concerning a major character or a main event.

8) Is the most important word used initially?

In all cases it was determined that the initial word was important, and thus that the most important word was used initially.

9) Are vivid descriptors included?

A check of five headings in each index showed that vivid descriptors were used in about two-thirds of the indexes. These terms accurately described the text, thus giving access, but did not use the specific vocabulary used in the text.

10) Do double postings occur?

Double postings are duplicate entries under different terms, such as "cats" and "felines". Double postings occurred very infrequently; only two cases were noted.

11) Do double postings have the same locators?

In the two examples noted, the double postings did not have the same locators. This was a relatively serious fault in the index.

12) Are main headings distinguishable by type?

Main headings invariably began with a capital letter. In a few notable examples, the initial headings under each letter of the alphabet was preceded by an empty line, or sometimes by a single capital letter in larger or ornate type. These indexes were particularly open in appearance and were easier to use.

13) Are subheadings distinguishable by type?

In all cases, subheadings were found to use the same type as the main headings. They were also typically indented two spaces on the line beneath the main heading. In some cases, the subheadings were capitalized (as are the main headings). In other cases, the main headings were all capitalized but the subheadings were both indented and printed in lower case letters. This was the easiest method for the user to read.

14) Is a variety of typography used in the locators?

A variety of typography was seldom found. Where it did

occur, it served a useful purpose in indicating (by boldface type) that the reference was to an illustration.

15) If so, does varied typography make the usage clear?

When varied typography was found, there was also a note of explanation preceding the index to inform the reader of its use and meaning.

16) Are cross-references accurate?

Cross-references were seldom used. The researcher found two examples used appropriately, and one example used incorrectly.

17) Are "see" references used?

"See" references were found in approximately one-fourth of the indexes, and were often found only once or twice in an index.

18) Are "see also" references used?

"See also" references were also found in approximately one-fourth of the indexes, and were often found only once or twice in a index. Curiously, "see" and "see also" references were seldom found in the same index.

19) Is the format open and uncrowded?

The format was judged to be open and uncrowded in slightly more than half of the indexes. Only a few formats were refreshingly different -- using bold letters before the first main headings of each letter of the alphabet, or leaving a space between main headings for each letter -- and these examples occurred in the older books, prior to 1970. In many modern examples, the format was crowded with fine print, several columns on a page, and with no spacing between the main headings beginning with separate letters of the alphabet.

20) Does the type size used in the index equal the type size used in the text?

In the great majority of the indexes, the type size used in the index was considerably smaller than that used in the text. The lines were more closely spaced, and even the letters were closer together. This tighter format serves to set the index apart from the body of the text, but it may hinder a visually-impaired user.

21) Is there more than one type of index?

The researcher expected to occasionally find more than one type of index in a book, but did not. It was noted in several cases that a single index included, for example, main headings concerning the life of an artist or composer, and italicized titles of his works as main headings. In the larger context of an adult book, one might expect to find separate indexes for such topics.

22) Are other features included in the index?

There were very few other features noted. As recorded above, there was the infrequent use of italics or boldface type, or the use of spacing to enhance the format of the index. Otherwise, the researcher was disappointed to find no other unusual or noteworthy features in the indexes examined.

h) Recommendations.

This researcher believes that many more biographies written for children should be indexed. Only in recent years has the percentage of books with indexes exceeded the percentage of books without indexes. This positive trend should be encouraged and supported by seekers of information.

Specifically, this researcher believes that a biography which has more than seventy-five pages, which is divided into chapters, and which is not heavily illustrated (less than half of the pages contain illustrations) should be indexed. Shorter books, or those more heavily illustrated, may certainly be indexed, yet books of this nature are generally intended for

younger readers who are more apt to seek general overview information rather than specific details.

Double postings could be used to advantage to help young readers use the index; however, they would extend the overall length of the index.

The typography commonly used is adequate when indentation is used (in the case of subheadings) or when extra spacing separates the headings beginning with separate letters of the alphabet. However, overall, indexes would appear more user-friendly if a type size were used which is near or equal to the size of type used in the text.

"See" and "see also" references should be used more frequently to help young readers find the appropriate term in the index, or to draw the user's attention to related information under another heading.

An open and uncrowded format would be more inviting to the young user, and would help him keep his place while using the index.

These features are found in a few indexes. They could be employed to good advantage in many more indexes, with little more effort on the part of the indexer; these recommendtations apply to typesetters as well.

V. Summary and conclusion.

In the experience of the researcher, biographies written for children often contain no index, or are inadequately indexed. The researcher has sought to describe the type of biography which should be indexed, and to set forth the characteristics of an excellent index.

In gathering the data for this project, the researcher examined three hundred recommended biographies written for children in order to describe the occurrence and the nature of their indexes. Approximately forty percent of the biographies were found to contain indexes. These indexes were evaluated using an adapted checklist which follows the guidelines of the American Society of Indexers; the characteristics of the indexes were compared to the standard set by the indexing tool. Recommendations were made to improve the quality of indexing in this genre.

The researcher has concluded that indexes should be used consistently in books which contain more than seventy-five pages, and which are divided into chapters, thus being intended for a reader having mid-elementary reading ability. The construction of these indexes should

incorporate a variety of indexing techniques to make them easier to use. The typography should be clear and the format uncrowded, to make information in biographies for children more accessible to the young people who use the books.

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